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TELEGRAM

December 01, 2003

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 5134 - UNKNOWN)
TAGS: PGOV, PINR
Captions: None
Subject: SHAYKH ZAYED CLARIFIES UAE SUCCESSION WITH PROMOTION OF
THIRD SON MOHAMMED AS ABU DHABI DEPUTY CROWN PRINCE
Ref: None

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 05134

SIPDIS
CXABU:
ACTION: POL
INFO: P/M ECON DAO USLO RSO PAO AMB DCM
Laser1:
INFO: PAO FCS

DISSEMINATION: POL
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: CDA:RAALBRIGHT
DRAFTED: POL:JFMAYBURY
CLEARED: NONE

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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
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RUEHZM/GCC COLLECTIVE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 005134

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/30/13
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: SHAYKH ZAYED CLARIFIES UAE
SUCCESSION WITH PROMOTION OF THIRD SON
MOHAMMED AS ABU DHABI DEPUTY CROWN PRINCE

(U) Classified by Richard A. Albright, Chargé
d'Affaires, a.i., Reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

1. (C) UAE President Shaykh Zayed on November 30
appointed his third eldest son, Armed Forces
Chief of Staff LTG Shaykh Mohammed bin Zayed
(MbZ), as Deputy Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. The
Emiri decree stated that MbZ would assume the

position of Crown Prince once that position becomes vacant. When Shaykh Zayed departs the scene, he will be succeeded by his eldest son, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Khalifa, with the consensus of the other emirates. MbZ would then succeed Khalifa as Crown Prince. With this decree, Shaykh Zayed has removed all doubt from the UAE succession and placed the Beni Fatima in the key positions of power.

¶2. (C) MbZ's appointment confirms what has been widely believed all along, that Shaykh Mohammed would succeed CP Khalifa as Crown Prince when Khalifa succeeds their father. Just as important, MbZ's appointment is further evidence of the consolidation of power by Zayed's six sons from his wife Fatima. In October, Mohammed's younger brother Hamdan, the de facto Foreign Minister, was appointed Deputy Prime Minister, with the mandate for running the heretofore dysfunctional federal cabinet. The other four brothers hold important portfolios: Abdallah (Information Minister), Hazza (Head of State Security), Tahnoun (Chairman of the President's Private Department, which looks after Shaykh Zayed's personal investments and foreign properties), and Mansour (Director General of the President's Office).

¶3. (U) Biographic notes: According to information from the official UAE news agency, MbZ was born in 1961 and has been Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces since 1993. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General on January 24, 1994. He was schooled in the UAE, and graduated from Sandhurst Military Academy in 1979. He has held the rank of Commander of Air Forces and Air Defense, and Deputy Chief of Staff. MbZ is also Shaykh Zayed's Advisor on National Security Affairs, a member of the Supreme Petroleum Council, and president of the UAE think tank, Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR). He is married and has nine sons. We know that he has daughters as well.
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